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ABSTRACT

This document provides a one-page summary of the policies, programs, and requirements of each state in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) relative to the transition from high school to college and careers. The policies described are: (1) high school graduation requirements, including curriculum and tests; (2) early outreach programs (federally funded and state-sponsored) that encourage students in the middle grades and high school to prepare for college; (3) joint enrollment opportunities that enable high school students to take college-level courses; (4) college admission and placement requirements; (5) feedback reports through which colleges notify individual high schools of how their graduates performed in college; and (6) state-sponsored, merit-based scholarship programs for all students who meet specified criteria. States in the SREB, the subjects of the profiles, are: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Relevant Web sites are listed for each state. (SLD)

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SREB

# High School to College and Careers:

## *Aligning State Policies*

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College Readiness Series

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# High School to College and Careers:

## *Aligning State Policies*

***Are the policies that govern high school graduation and college admission in your state carefully aligned to promote college readiness?***

***Do high school graduation requirements align with college placement standards? Or are many accomplished high school graduates placed in college remedial courses?***

***Do transition policies motivate high school students to use their senior year productively, or do these policies allow many seniors to waste their last year of high school?***

SREB's College Readiness Policy Connections initiative seeks to help states ask the right questions and improve student access to college through better alignment of the policies that govern the transition from high school to college and careers.

This document provides a one-page summary of each SREB state's policies, programs and requirements related to the transition from high school to college and careers. The policies described are:

- high school graduation requirements, including curriculum and tests;
- early outreach programs (both federally funded and state-sponsored) that encourage students in the middle grades and high school to prepare for college;
- joint enrollment opportunities that enable high school students to take college-level courses;
- college admission and placement requirements;
- feedback reports through which colleges notify individual high schools of how their graduates performed in college; and

- state-sponsored, merit-based scholarship programs for all students who meet specified criteria.

As state policy-makers and education leaders study the various state policies, they will note considerable variety. They will be able to assess individual state policies by how well they support the state's overall college-readiness effort. Further, they will notice that some states have been successful in moving beyond policy alignment to achieve direct policy linkages. For those who need more specific information than what is included, this report ends with a list of state Web sites that describe many of the policies.

## Variations in State Policy Frameworks

Each SREB state has made strides in aligning policies and programs. All of the states have sought creative solutions for motivating and better preparing students for college. Every state, however, struggles with closing gaps among educational policies, including those that affect the transition from high school to college. Not all solutions are appropriate for all states. The examples below attest to the variety of approaches:

- Some states require high school graduation tests; others do not. Some use end-of-course exams, but not all states require students to pass these exams to graduate from high school.
- Most states stipulate that the series of mathematics courses required for high school graduation must begin with Algebra I. Not every state requires that at least one science course be lab-based.
- Many states have developed extensive early outreach programs to help students in the middle grades and high school understand what it takes to be prepared for college. Some of these programs receive federal funding through GEAR UP.
- Some states have linked the requirements for high school graduation to the requirements for college admission. In other states, colleges and universities set requirements for college admission, but they are not uniformly linked to high school graduation requirements.
- Most states have developed feedback reports, through which colleges notify high schools of how their graduates perform. Most recognize that these reports have potential in guiding curriculum alignment and identifying gaps that educational support programs might close. Most states acknowledge, however, that these reports are underused.

- Approximately half of the SREB states fund merit-based scholarship programs. While some are based entirely on merit, most combine merit and need. These scholarships encourage students to consider college and to prepare for it as early as elementary school.

Many SREB states have linked some policies and programs tightly in order to help students begin preparing early for college.

- **Oklahoma's** early outreach program encourages middle grades students to take rigorous courses. Students who successfully complete these courses are eligible for supplemental scholarships that they can redeem when they are ready for college.
- **Florida** and **Texas** provide incentives for students to take college-level courses while in high school. In both states, success in this coursework is linked to scholarships. Texas also requires completion of four such courses (or research-based high school courses) for its distinguished diploma. College admission in both states is based on the class rank of students who took the college-preparatory curriculum. In 2005, Texas high school students will be expected to complete the college-preparatory curriculum for high school graduation. Current minimum requirements will be eliminated except for a few students whose parents and school officials agree to allow them to meet the lower requirements.
- **Louisiana's** TOPS scholarship recognizes the extra effort of high school students who complete 10 honors courses. In 2003, the scholarship requirements will change; students then must complete a college-preparatory core curriculum to qualify.
- **Delaware** rewards students' strong performance on statewide tests with scholarships and distinctions on high school diplomas in an effort to encourage students to both achieve at higher levels and perform as well as they can on the assessment measures.
- **Georgia** links high school graduation requirements with college admission requirements and with both the HOPE Scholarship and Grant. The state's early outreach program, PREP, informs middle grades students of requirements and programs.
- **Kentucky** promotes continuous achievement by and high standards for its students by linking the value of college scholarships to students' high school GPAs in *each* year of high school and to scores on college admission tests.
- **West Virginia's** GEAR UP program awards scholarships to students based on their parents' involvement in their education through the middle grades and high school.

- **North Carolina** has developed a Web site that students can use — beginning in the middle grades — to chart their progress toward completing requirements for college and to record their grades and test scores. The Web site also provides information about scholarships, other financial aid and college requirements. When students are ready to apply to college, the Web site makes it easier for them by automatically loading some information onto online applications to North Carolina colleges.

## Guiding Principles for Developing State Profiles

The following principles guided decisions about what to include in the summaries of states' policy frameworks.

- **Only fully adopted policies are included.** Proposals are not cited. Policies that have been approved, however, are indicated, even if they will be phased in over several years.
- The notes about course requirements for both high school graduation and college admission are most detailed in areas that differ among states. **These notes do not include every nuance of state regulations.**
- **Early outreach programs are included only if they are statewide in scope.** While many postsecondary institutions and local school districts have launched more focused efforts, this document examines only programs that are designed to reach all students in target populations.
- Every SREB state's colleges and universities recognize Advanced Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) scores and the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum as ways that students can earn college credit while they are in high school or when they first enroll in college. **Policies that promote such credit (AP, CLEP or IB) are not cited, except when they are linked strategically to other programs or policies.**
- **Only scholarship programs that are based at least partially on merit are described in the state summaries.** All 16 SREB states have need-based scholarship programs designed to increase educational access for youths from low- and middle-income families. They all also have established college savings plans based on section 529 of the Internal Revenue Service code. These plans, generally referred to as 529 College Savings Plans, provide tax incentives to save money for college expenses. In the section about early outreach programs, the state-by-state analyses address the means that states use to ensure that all youths know about financial-aid opportunities.

# Alabama

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units[1] | Diploma | Diploma+[2] | AA[3] |
|---|---|---|---|
| English language arts | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[4] | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Science[5] | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Social studies | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Physical education | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Health education | .5 | .5 | .5 |
| Arts education | .5 | .5 | .5 |
| Computer applications[6] | .5 | .5 | .5 |
| Foreign language[7] | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Electives | 5.5 | 3.5 | 5.5 |
| Total | 24 | 24 | 24 |

**Notes:** (1) Students with disabilities may earn the Alabama Occupational Diploma (not shown above). (2) Diploma+ is the High School Diploma With Advanced Academic Endorsement. (3) AA is the Alternate Adult High School Diploma. The course requirements are the same as for the High School Diploma. It is awarded to students who do not pass the graduation test (**see high school graduation test**) but do pass the GED while in high school. (4) Includes Algebra I and geometry for the High School Diploma; add Algebra II with trigonometry for High School Diploma+. (5) Includes biology and physical science. (6) Local boards of education may waive the computer requirement if the student demonstrates competency; .5 credit will be added to electives. (7) Diploma+ students must complete two credits of the same language.

**High school graduation test:** Alabama is phasing in five state-developed subtests that students must pass to earn diplomas or diplomas+. Reading and language tests began in 2001; math and science tests began in 2002; and social studies tests will begin in 2003. Students have multiple opportunities to retake tests before graduation, including during summers. Remediation can be provided until students are 21 years old. Students are tested during the spring of 10th grade to assess their strengths and weaknesses; official testing begins in the 11th grade. If a student passes a subtest in 10th grade, the student is not required to retake that subtest. Students who do not ultimately pass all five subtests may be awarded the Alternate Adult High School Diploma if they complete all curriculum requirements and pass the GED.

## Early Outreach Programs

Alabama does not have a statewide, state-coordinated early outreach program.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school sophomores, juniors and seniors may enroll concurrently in two-year colleges. They also may be admitted to college (without concurrent high school enrollment) after the junior year in high school. Participants must have 3.0 high school grade-point averages. Students enrolled concurrently at universities must be juniors or seniors and must meet admission test criteria set by the institutions. All such students must have the approval of parents and high school officials. Institutions and local school systems may form agreements to provide opportunities for students to earn college credit as well as high school credit for college courses.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Admission requirements are set by the governing boards of the universities.

**College/University placement requirements:** Placement criteria are established by the governing boards of the institutions.

**Community college admission requirements:** For enrollment in associate's degree programs or courses that apply toward an associate's degree, a student must meet one of the following standards: (1) High School Diploma (or Diploma+), the equivalent from another state or private, accredited institution, or a GED; (2) high school diploma equivalent to the Alabama diploma issued by a private high school, along with passing scores on all subtests of the Alabama high school graduation test or an ACT score of 16 or an equivalent score on the SAT I; or (3) Alabama Occupational Diploma (see Note 1 under **high school graduation requirements**) or equivalent with a minimum ACT score of 16 or an equivalent score on the SAT I. Students applying to vocational programs must demonstrate an ability to benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** The Alabama College System (two-year) requires that institutions use ASSET or COMPASS to assess students unless students meet minimum scores on the SAT I (480 verbal and 526 math) or the ACT (20) within three years of high school graduation. The system chancellor recommends minimum scores on ASSET or COMPASS for college placement.

## Feedback Reports

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education provides a high school report to the state superintendent of education. This report tracks Alabama high school seniors to determine how many enroll the following fall in a two- or four-year public institution. Totals are provided for each high school, including the number of students in postsecondary education and the number of students taking remedial courses.

In addition, the University of Alabama System reports on students who enter its institutions. It provides information on the number of high school graduates attending college, the proportion admitted, the results of college admission tests, the number and percentage enrolled in remedial courses, the number enrolling in advanced courses, and performance in freshman courses.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

Alabama does not sponsor a statewide merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria. It does offer need-based funding.

# Arkansas

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | College-prep |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social science[3] | 3 |
| Health/physical education | 1 |
| Oral communication | .5 |
| Fine arts | .5 |
| Career focus electives[4] | 6 |
| **Total** | **21** |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I, geometry and one higher-level math course. (2) Biology I, physical science and one additional unit. (3) World history, U.S. history, one-half unit of civics or government, and one-half unit of Arkansas history unless included in the seventh or eighth grade, in which case local school systems may substitute approved alternatives. (4) Counselors at the local school district establish these electives based on students' work aspirations.

**High school graduation test:** Arkansas does not require students to pass a statewide test to graduate from high school. End-of-course exams for Algebra I, geometry and 11th-grade literacy began in 2001-2002 as a part of the state's accountability system. Schools must provide remediation for students who do not reach proficiency.

## Early Outreach Programs

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education, in conjunction with the State Board of Education, offers ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) for eighth- and 10th-graders.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Students may enroll in college courses while they are in high school. Participating students are not required to apply for admission to the college, but they must meet institutional requirements for eligibility.

The state's early-admission policy allows students who have not completed high school to enroll full time in college, usually after their junior year. They must meet institutional admission requirements.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** For admission, a student must earn a high school diploma or GED. For unconditional admission, students need to complete the core curriculum identified below as CCR; those working toward the Academic Challenge Scholarship (see **state merit-based scholarship programs**) must meet the requirements identified below as CCR+.

| | CCR[1] | CCR+[2] |
|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[3] | 3 | 4 |
| Science[4] | 3 | 3 |
| Social studies[5] | 3 | 3 |
| Foreign language | 0 | 2 |
| **Total** | **13** | **16** |

**Notes:** (1) Core curriculum requirements for unconditional admission. (2) Core curriculum requirements for Academic Challenge Scholarship. (3) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry. The additional course for the CCR+ must be more advanced. In 2004, a course will be added to the CCR, and it, too, must be more advanced. (4) All must be lab-based. Choose from physical science, biology, chemistry or physics courses, with a limit of one course from life science. (5) Includes American history, world history, and one-half unit of civics or American government.

**University placement requirements:** Students must earn scores of at least 19 on the English, math and reading sections of the ACT (or equivalent scores on the ASSET, SAT or COMPASS) for placement in regular courses. First-time freshmen who do not complete the high school core curriculum with cumulative GPAs of 2.0 may receive conditional admission. During the first 30 semester-hours, these students must take 12 hours of core academic courses and any necessary remedial courses and must maintain GPAs of 2.0.

**Two-year college admission requirements:** Students who are at least 17 years old and who pass institutional tests that demonstrate they are able to benefit from instruction are eligible for admission as full-time students. Some programs require a high school diploma or GED. Conditional admission is provided to first-time freshmen who are seeking technical certificates or associate of applied science degrees and who did not complete the core curriculum. During the first 30 semester-hours, these students must complete six hours of core academic courses, six hours of technical courses in their program and any necessary remedial courses, and they must maintain GPAs of 2.0.

**Two-year college placement requirements:** Placement procedures vary by institution.

## Feedback Reports

Feedback reports are coordinated with ACT Inc. The reports provide schools with information on how many and what percentages of high school graduates applied to college, were accepted and enrolled. They also include data on scores on college admission tests and college placement tests. They report on the proportion of students who complete the recommended core curriculum, high school grade-point averages and class ranks, and the number and percentage enrolled in college remedial courses. Freshman performance indicators include credit-hours attempted, credit-hours earned and grade-point averages, and the reports indicate what percentage of freshmen return for a second year.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

If state funding is available, the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship program will pay students up to $2,500 annually. The initial award is based on financial need, the student's ACT composite score and high school grade-point average based on the CCR+ (see **university admission requirements**). ACT and GPA requirements for scholarships to two-year and four-year institutions are shown below.

| ACT score | GPA for four-year Institutions | GPA for two-year Institutions |
|---|---|---|
| 15-18 | 3.25 | 3.0 |
| 19 | 3.0 | 2.75 |
| 20-24 | 2.75 | 2.5 |
| 25-36 | 2.50 | 2.25 |

The scholarship can be renewed for up to three additional years. Each recipient must maintain a college GPA of 2.75 and must complete 30 semester-hours per academic year.

# Delaware

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English language arts | 4 |
| Mathematics | 3 |
| Science | 3 |
| Social studies | 3 |
| Health/physical education | 1.5 |
| Computer literacy[1] | 1 |
| Career pathway[2] | 3 |
| Electives | 3.5 |
| Total | 22 |

**Notes:** (1) Computer literacy credit is awarded when students demonstrate competency. (2) A career pathway comprises courses designed to develop knowledge and skills in a particular career or academic area.

**High school graduation test:** Beginning with the class of 2004, 10th-graders are tested in reading, writing and math. Beginning with the class of 2006, tests in science and social studies will be administered in the 11th grade.

Using the results of these tests, a diploma index is calculated by multiplying the scores in each content area by assigned weights and adding the results. For the graduating class of 2004, weights are .40 for reading, .40 for math and .20 for writing. For the class of 2006, each content area will be weighted .20. Students may retake the tests for up to five years after graduation. The highest earned score in each content area is used in calculating the diploma index.

Those who score 4.0 on the diploma index receive distinguished diplomas. Those who score a 3.0 receive a standard diploma and those who score less than 3.0 receive basic diplomas. For each diploma, students must complete all courses and other requirements established by the state, local districts or charter schools.

## Early Outreach Programs

Delaware does not have a statewide, state-coordinated early outreach program.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Delaware Technical and Community College permits early enrollment and early admission. Students must obtain approval from their parents/guardians, high school principals and counselors, and college deans.

In addition to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and College Level Examination Program credit, the community college also recognizes DANTES credit, based on military coursework. Institutions set threshold scores for credit.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Admission to Delaware's two public universities is based on grades, class rank, test scores and recommendations from appropriate high school officials. An applicant must have a high school diploma and an overall C average in all academic work and as well as a C average in all required course units, shown below.

| Units | University of Delaware | Delaware State University |
|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics | 2 | 3 |
| Science | 3[1] | 3 |
| Social studies | 1 | 2 |
| History | 1 | 0 |
| World history | 1 | 0 |
| Foreign language | 2 | 0 |
| Electives | 3 | 4[2] |
| Total | 17 | 16 |

**Notes:** (1) One unit must be lab-based. (2) Computer science or foreign language credits.

**University placement requirements:** At Delaware State University, students may be provisionally admitted if they do not meet regular admission requirements. Based on their high school records and test scores (ACT or SAT), they may be required to attend a pre-college, weeklong summer program, limit their course load, and maintain contact with an educational support program.

**Community college admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or GEDs, or they must be 18 years old and pass institutional tests that demonstrate their ability to benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** All students except those with bachelor's degrees must take standardized placement tests in reading, writing and math. Results determine the level of instruction at which students begin college coursework.

## Feedback Reports

Delaware's colleges and universities do not report to high schools about student admission, placement and performance.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

Delaware does not sponsor a statewide merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria. It does offer need-based funding.

Delaware provides $1,000 scholarships for 300 students in grade eight and 300 for students in grade 10 who score highest on the state tests in reading, writing or math. Of these scholarships, half at each grade level are designated for students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunches.

# Florida

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social science[3] | 3 |
| Arts/career education | 1 |
| Life management skills | .5 |
| Physical education | 1 |
| Academic electives | 8.5 |
| **Total[4]** | **24** |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I and above. (2) Lab-based. (3) One unit each of American history and world history; one-half unit each of economics and American government. (4) 2.0 GPA is required.

**High school graduation test:** Students must pass the 10th-grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), which measures achievement on the state's curriculum standards in reading, writing and math. Florida will add a science test in 2003. The test includes multiple-choice items and performance tasks that require students to write answers or solve problems. Students have multiple opportunities to earn passing scores.

## Early Outreach Programs

The *One Florida* initiative promotes college readiness by encouraging 10th-graders to take the PSAT, permitting them to take the college placement subtest in math (see **university placement requirements**), making Advanced Placement courses more available in low-performing schools, establishing a partnership with the College Board to train teachers in these schools, and offering academic assistance to students.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Through a statewide articulation agreement, Florida encourages high school students to take "accelerated options," including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment and CLEP. (See the section on **state merit-based scholarship programs.**)

To be eligible for dual enrollment in college courses, a student must have a 3.0 high school GPA. For dual enrollment in vocational courses, a student must have a 2.0 high school GPA and must pass the Florida placement test, called the FCELPT (see **university placement requirements**). After six semesters of high school, eligible students may be admitted to college in "early admission" programs. In both dual enrollment and early admission, students earn both high school and college credit for their work.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or the equivalent. There are three routes to admission:

**B average based on 19 units** — Honors, IB and AP credit are given additional GPA weight. Students must earn 19 units: English (4), science (3), math (3), social studies (3), foreign language (2) and electives (4). College-preparatory courses must account for 15 units.

**Graduates in the top 20 percent of their public high school classes** — These students, who also must complete 19 credits and take either the SAT I or ACT, are guaranteed admission to any one of the 11 public universities in the state.

**Others admitted on the basis of high school GPA and scores on the ACT or SAT I** — The chart below shows examples of the sliding scale.

| High school GPA | SAT | ACT |
|---|---|---|
| 2.0 | 1140 | 25 |
| 2.5 | 1010 | 21 |
| 2.9 | 970 | 20 |

Through a process Florida calls profile assessment, up to 10 percent of the state system's new students may be admitted annually even if they do not meet these requirements.

**University placement requirements:** Students with SAT I or ACT scores below thresholds (see chart below) must take the Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (FCELPT). If they do not pass this test, they are placed in remedial courses.

| | Math | English/verbal | Reading |
|---|---|---|---|
| ACT | 19 | 17 | 18 |
| SAT I | 440 | 440 | Not applicable |
| | **Algebra** | **Reading** | **Sentence** |
| FCELPT | 72 | 83 | 83 |

**Community college admission requirements:** U.S. citizens who are at least 18 years old must hold standard high school diplomas or GEDs. Those who do not meet this requirement may be admitted in vocational programs or may be required to take the FCELPT. They may complete only 12 hours of community college credit unless they earn high school diplomas or GEDs.

**Community college placement requirements:** Same as the university requirements (see **university placement requirements**).

## Feedback Reports

The *Florida Readiness for College Report* provides schools with information about the numbers and percentages of their graduates who have gone to college, their scores on placement tests, and the numbers enrolled in college remedial courses.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship provides awards at three levels: Scholar, Medallion, and Gold Seal. For the first two levels, students must complete 15 college-prep units and must attempt five acceleration options through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, CLEP or Dual Enrollment. The top academic student in each county receives $1,500, which is prorated if he or she attends college part time.

The **Scholar** award goes to students with 3.5 GPAs, weighted for challenging courses; composite SAT I scores of at least 1270 or ACT scores of 28; and 75 hours of community service. The scholarship pays tuition and fees, plus $300.

The **Medallion** award requires a 3.0 GPA, weighted for challenging courses, and composite SAT I scores of at least 970 or ACT score of 20. The scholarship pays 75 percent of tuition and fees.

The **Gold Seal** requires students to earn 15.5 units (all graduation requirements except electives) with 3.0 GPAs, weighted for challenging courses. In addition, they must earn 3.5 unweighted GPAs in three vocational units within one vocational program. Students also must meet minimum SAT I scores (440 each in math and verbal) or ACT scores (17 in English, 19 in math and 18 in reading). The scholarship provides 75 percent of tuition and fees.

# Georgia

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | CP[1] | CP+ | TC | TC+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Social studies | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Health and physical education | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Technology/arts/foreign language | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Foreign language | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Technology/career-prep | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| Electives | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Additional core | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| **Total** | **22** | **24** | **22** | **24** |

**Notes:** (1) CP/CP+: College-Prep/With Distinction; TC/TC+: Technology and Career-Prep/With Distinction. "Distinction" requires a 3.0 GPA. (2) Begins with Algebra I. (3) Lab-based. Includes physical and life sciences for CP, CP+ or TC+ diplomas.

**High school graduation test:** Students must pass five state-developed subtests to earn diplomas: writing; English/language arts; math; social studies; and science. They first take them as juniors and may retake subtests. In spring 2003, Georgia will begin using end-of-course exams in algebra, geometry, biology, physical science, economics, U.S. history, ninth-grade literature/composition and American literature/composition.

## Early Outreach Programs

The Georgia Board of Regents sponsors an outreach program, called PREP, that is aimed at seventh-graders. It provides after-school enrichment and summer day-camps for students at risk of being unprepared for college. Students who receive support in the middle grades continue to receive support throughout high school.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students may be admitted to college full time if they have completed 11th grade. Once they complete 10th grade, they may enroll jointly in high school and college to satisfy requirements for both high school and college graduation. Those admitted to college and those jointly enrolled in high school and college can qualify for reimbursement of their college tuition by meeting the following minimum requirements: 970 on the SAT I or a comparable score on the ACT; minimum high school grade-point averages of 3.0 based on 16 college-prep units (see **University System admission requirements**); parents'/ guardians' written consent; and completion of all college-prep requirements. Those admitted early to college must meet all placement requirements and thereby qualify to enroll in standard college courses. Students who earn SAT I verbal scores of 530 may be admitted even if they have not completed all the required English and social studies courses; those with SAT I math scores of 530 may be admitted even if they have not completed all required math courses.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Admission to all institutions — including two-year colleges — is based on 16 course units (college-prep courses in English, math, science, social studies and foreign language) and the Freshman Index. The units must include Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, a higher-level math, and two years of the same foreign language. Students who meet certain requirements may enter two-year colleges with 13 units (see **University System placement requirements**).

**Freshman Index:** The Freshman Index (FI) is a score based on a student's SAT I or ACT score and on his or her GPA in the 16-unit college-prep curriculum.

FI = 500 x (high school GPA) + SAT I verbal + SAT I math
FI = 500 x (high school GPA) + (ACT composite x 42) + 88

| Freshman Index thresholds | Regular | Limited[1] |
|---|---|---|
| Research university | 2500 | 2020 |
| Regional university | 2040 | 1830 |
| State university | 1940 | 1790 |
| Two-year colleges | 1830 | 1640 |

**Notes:** (1) A few students may be admitted to a university with lower FI scores if they satisfy curricular requirements and meet minimum scores on placement tests. These students must have SAT I verbal scores of 430 and math scores of 310. To attend two-year colleges, these students must have SAT I verbal scores of 330 and math scores of 310. Certain provisions also permit the admission of those with TC diplomas.

**University System placement requirements:** Scores on the locally developed Collegiate Placement Exam (CPE) or ACT's COMPASS exam determine placement for degree-seeking students whose SAT I verbal scores are below 430 or math scores are below 400 (or equivalent scores on the ACT) or who have not met the college-prep curriculum requirements in English or math. Students who score below 75 on any CPE subtest (reading, English or math) — or comparably on COMPASS — are required to take remedial courses. Students admitted with deficiencies in high school science, foreign language or social studies must take courses in those disciplines without earning credit.

**Technical college admission and placement requirements:** Students must take SAT's ASSET exam to determine placement. Thresholds for admission to associate's degree programs are comparable to the minimum COMPASS scores set by the University System. Provisionally admitted students must take remedial courses in core areas. Students do not need the high school diploma for admission, but they must earn diplomas or GEDs before they can earn degrees.

## Feedback Reports

The Board of Regents provides information to schools about where their graduates enroll. The board also provides information on the number of high school graduates attending college, the proportion admitted, their scores on admission and placement tests, the number and percentage enrolled in remedial courses, and the performance of freshmen.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

Georgia residents qualify for HOPE Scholarships in two ways: (1) 3.0 high school GPA or an 80 high school average, based on the 16-unit college-prep curriculum (see section on **University System admission requirements**); or (2) a 3.2 high school GPA or an 85 high school average, based on the 13 core credits (English, math, science and social studies) of the TC or TC+ diploma. Scholarship recipients at public colleges receive tuition, fees and book allowances. Those at private colleges receive $3,000 per academic year, in addition to $1,100 Georgia Tuition Equalization Grants.

Students also are eligible—without a GPA requirement—for HOPE Grants for nondegree certificate and diploma programs at public institutions. The grant also covers tuition and fees and includes a book allowance. GED recipients may qualify for GED Grants of $500, which they must use within two years of earning the GEDs and which they may apply toward their first year of college or technical study.

# Kentucky

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units[1] | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 |
| Social studies | 3 |
| Health and physical education | 1 |
| Fine arts | 1 |
| Electives | 7 |
| **Total** | **22** |

**Notes:** (1) Substitutions are allowed if alternative courses are rigorous and address similar components. (2) Includes Algebra I and geometry. (3) Life, physical and earth/space sciences.

**High school graduation test:** Kentucky does not require students to pass a statewide test for high school graduation.

## Early Outreach Programs

Kentucky administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program to prepare middle grades students for college and to create or expand programs to strengthen schools.

The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education sponsors the Kentucky Early Math Placement Test, an online test for 10th- and 11th-graders that is based on skills needed for college and that includes topics from high school Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry. It provides students with information about deficiencies early so they can take steps while in high school to prepare for college.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Higher education institutions may permit high school students to take courses and may admit them as full-time students. These students must meet the institutions' admission requirements. Institutions also may arrange dual-enrollment agreements with local school systems to give students the opportunity to earn high school and college credit in college courses.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Students must graduate from high school or earn GEDs, and they must take the ACT or SAT.

| Units | PCC[1] |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 |
| Social studies[4] | 3 |
| Health and physical education | 1 |
| Fine arts | 1 |
| Electives | 7 |
| **Total** | **22** |

**Notes:** (1) The pre-college curriculum (PCC) is required for admission of first-time freshmen under age 21 who enroll in four-year programs at Kentucky public universities. In 2004, two years of foreign language will be required and the number of electives will be reduced to five. (2) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry or higher-level course. (3) Life, physical and earth/space sciences; one must be lab-based. (4) Students choose from courses that focus on U.S. history, economics, government, world geography and world civilization.

**University placement requirements:** Students who do not meet admission standards may be admitted provisionally. Institutions must use ACT (or SAT I) scores to determine placement in English, math and reading courses; they also may use additional tests. They may set higher minimum scores than the system mandates. Students who do meet these thresholds must take remedial courses or entry-level courses that offer academic support. Institutions may establish plans for students to meet all deficiencies and deadlines by which students must meet them.

**Community/technical college admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or GEDs or must be eligible to pursue GEDs.

**Community/technical college placement requirements:** Students whose ACT scores are below 18 (or comparable SAT I) must take the COMPASS or ASSET exam to determine placement in remedial courses. Students must complete those courses before they enroll in courses that lead to certificates, diplomas or degrees.

## Feedback Reports

The *Kentucky High School Feedback Report* is coordinated with ACT Inc. It provides high schools with numbers and percentages of their graduates who are enrolled in college and with these students' ACT scores. It also compares students' GPAs in high school and college and reports the percentages enrolled in remedial and advanced courses in English and math. The report includes information on freshman credit-hours attempted and earned and their grade-point averages as well as information about how many return for the spring semester and for a second year.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority administers the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES), which provides support for state residents based on their academic performance throughout high school. The scholarship's value increases for each year of high school in which a student earns at least a 2.5 GPA in the pre-college curriculum (see **university admission requirements**). A student receives bonus funding based on his or her highest ACT score (or the SAT I equivalent). The final amount is made available each year (generally limited to four years) that the student enrolls in a Kentucky postsecondary institution, as long as the student meets college GPA requirements. To maintain the scholarship, the student must earn a 2.5 GPA in the first year of college and must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA thereafter. Students must use the scholarship within five years of graduating from high school. Examples of funding are shown below:

| High school GPA | Amount | ACT | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.5 | $125 | 15 | $36 |
| 3.0 | $250 | 20 | $214 |
| 3.5 | $375 | 25 | $393 |
| 4.0 | $500 | 28+ | $500 |

Example: A student who has a 3.5 GPA in each of the first two years of high school and a 3.0 in the last two years and then scores a 25 on the ACT is eligible for an annual scholarship of $1,643 ($375+$375+$250+$250+$393), as long as he or she maintains the required GPA in college. The maximum annual award is $2,500.

# Louisiana

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English[1] | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 |
| Social studies[4] | 3 |
| Health | .5 |
| Physical education | 1.5 |
| Electives | 8 |
| **Total** | **23** |

**Notes:** (1) Business English may substitute for the fourth unit. (2) Limit of two courses considered entry-level mathematics (for example, Algebra I, Integrated Math I, and Applied Math I). (3) Biology, either physical science or integrated science, and one additional course. (4) American history, civics and free enterprise, and one additional unit.

**High school graduation test:** First-time 10th-graders in 2000-2001 or later must take Graduation Exit Examination for the 21st Century (GEE 21) as a requirement for graduation. Students take English language arts, math, science and social studies subtests. They must pass the English and math subtests, plus either the science or social studies subtest. Students have multiple opportunities during the 11th and 12th grades to retake the tests. Remedial assistance is provided.

## Early Outreach Programs

The Louisiana Board of Regents for Postsecondary Education — working with the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and public school systems statewide — administers ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) for eighth-graders.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Dual enrollment and early-admission programs are available at universities and community colleges. The eligibility requirements vary by institution. Institutions may have requirements regarding GPA, ACT/SAT I scores, and consent of schools and parents/guardians.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Admission requirements vary by institution. Universities may make exceptions to their admission policies for up to 15 percent of the freshman class, based on admission of students who are ethnic minorities for that institution and based on institutional interests, in accordance with a 1994 settlement between Louisiana and the U.S. District Court.

All Louisiana public four-year universities will implement admission criteria by fall 2005. In addition to requiring the mandated Regents' Curriculum, institutions grouped in three categories will share minimum standards for ACT scores, high school GPA, and class rank of high school graduates. Students must meet one of the criteria for an institutional group in order to be admitted to that type of institution.

| | High school GPA[1] | ACT | Class rank[2] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Flagship university | 3.0 | 25 | Top 10% |
| Statewide institutions | 2.5 | 23 | Top 25% |
| Regional institutions | 2.0 | 20 | Top 50% |

**Notes:** (1) GPA is based on the Regents' Curriculum (see the following chart). (2) Current decisions about class rank have been tentatively set by the regents for use during the policy's implementation.

| Regents' Curriculum | |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social studies[3] | 3 |
| Foreign language[4] | 2 |
| Computer technology | .5 |
| Fine arts | 1 |
| **Total** | **16.5** |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I and Algebra II, plus one advanced course. (2) Biology, chemistry and one other course. (3) American history, world history or geography, and civics/free enterprise. (4) Two units in the same language.

**University placement requirements:** Universities place students in English and math classes based on ACT scores. The institution determines the threshold scores.

**Community college admission requirements:** Community colleges require high school diplomas, GEDs or appropriate scores on institutional tests designed to determine that students are able to benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** Community colleges place students in remedial courses based on institutionally determined tests, and they also set the threshold scores.

## Feedback Reports

The Louisiana Department of Education issues feedback reports that provide information about the number and percentage of graduates attending college, scores on college admission tests, the number and percentage enrolled in college remedial courses, and the number of students who continue from one year to the next.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) is based entirely on merit and has five categories of awards. Students must complete the core curriculum (currently the Regents' Curriculum; see above) with specified GPAs and ACT scores.

| Award level | GPA | ACT |
|---|---|---|
| Opportunity | 2.5 | 20 |
| Performance | 3.5 | 23 |
| Alternate performance[1] | 3.0 | 24 |
| Honors | 3.5 | 27 |
| Technical[2] | 2.5 | 17 |

**Notes:** (1) Alternate performance awards are available to students who complete 10 honors courses. This award level will end in 2003. (2) For the technical level, students may substitute business English for English IV.

At the opportunity level, TOPS provides tuition. At both performance levels, it pays a $400 stipend in addition to tuition; and at the honors level it pays an $800 stipend in addition to tuition. The technical award provides tuition for two years at a technical institution or comparable amount for those who attend baccalaureate institutions.

# Maryland

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social science[3] | 3 |
| Physical education/health | 1 |
| Fine arts | 1 |
| Technology education | 1 |
| Electives[4] | 2 |
| **Total** | **18** |

**Notes:** (1) Includes Algebra I and geometry. (2) At least one lab-based course chosen from earth, life and physical sciences. (3) U.S. history, world history and local, state and national government. (4) Two units in foreign language, two units in advanced technology, or a state-approved career and technology program.

**High school graduation test:** Students must pass the Maryland Functional Tests in math, reading and writing and must take an approved government course. The tests may be eliminated if the Maryland High School Assessments (HSA), which now are being pilot-tested, become a graduation requirement. In 2001-2002, students began taking components of the HSA as end-of-course exams. They are required to take tests after English I, algebra/data analysis, government and biology. Other tests are expected. Students' transcripts include their scores (displayed as percentiles) on the end-of-course tests.

## Early Outreach Programs

The Maryland State Department of Education and the Higher Education Commission administer a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program, which serves 21 middle schools in 10 counties, has two purposes: (1) to provide information for parents/guardians through campus visits, financial-aid seminars and help in motivating students; and (2) to provide staff development.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Students who wish to enroll at a University System of Maryland institution before they have graduated from high school may be admitted if they agree to complete the college prep curriculum (see **University System of Maryland admission requirements**).

In cooperation with school systems, students may waive all or part of their senior year to attend community colleges and still may graduate with their high school classes. They also may enroll in certain college courses that have been approved by their school system to earn credit for both high school and college. Students must have permission from school systems, high school principals and parents/guardians. Students who wish to enroll in college courses without earning high school credit need only permission from parents/guardians.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University System of Maryland admission requirements:** Students must earn high school diplomas based on the courses listed below. They also must submit SAT I or ACT scores and SAT II writing scores for use by institutions in admission and placement decisions.

| Units | |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social science/history | 3 |
| Language (not English)[3] | 2 |
| Electives | 6 |
| **Total** | **21** |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I and II or Applied Math I and II, in addition to geometry or formal logic. (2) Two must be lab-based. (3) Two units in the same foreign language; some institutions permit two units in advanced technology to substitute for foreign language.

**University System of Maryland placement requirements:** Requirements vary by institution.

**Community college admission requirements:** Students must earn high school diplomas or GEDs or must demonstrate through testing that they can benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** Students who wish to take college-level courses must take tests in English, math and reading. They must take any necessary remedial courses, based on institutional guidelines.

## Feedback Reports

The Maryland Higher Education Commission's *Student Outcome and Achievement Report* to schools combines information from the College Board and American College Testing Program with information from the state's public and independent colleges and universities. The report provides information about students who graduated from Maryland high schools and enrolled in Maryland postsecondary institutions. It compares the performance of students who did and did not complete a college-preparatory curriculum and identifies factors that predict how college freshmen will perform.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

If funds are available, Maryland provides the Guaranteed Access Grant to students with high school GPAs of 2.5. The grant meets remaining financial need after family contributions, scholarships and other grants. Recipients must be full-time, degree-seeking students in two- or four-year Maryland public colleges or universities. Dependent students and their parents must be Maryland residents, and family income cannot exceed a specified level.

# Mississippi

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social science[3] | 3 |
| Health | .5 |
| Computer | 1 |
| Arts | 1 |
| Electives | 4.5 |
| **Total** | **20** |

**Notes:** (1) Includes Algebra I and geometry. (2) Includes biology; one unit may be technology applications, agriscience, allied health or aquaculture. (3) World history, U.S. history and government, and Mississippi studies.

**High school graduation test:** Students must pass the Functional Literacy Examination (FLE), which measures reading, writing and math. It first is administered in ninth grade, and students may retake the test. Mississippi will replace the graduation test with end-of-course tests. The transition will be complete by the graduation of students who began ninth grade in 2001-2002. They will take end-of-course tests in Algebra I, biology, English II and U.S. history.

## Early Outreach Programs

Mississippi does not have a statewide, state-coordinated early outreach program.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Institutions set standards for early admission based on students' GPAs in college-prep courses (see below), ACT scores and recommendations from high school principals. Students are eligible after their junior year.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:**

| | |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social studies[3] | 3 |
| Advanced electives[4] | 2 |
| Computer | .5 |
| **Total** | **15.5** |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry. (2) Choice from among biology, advanced biology, chemistry, advanced chemistry, physics and advanced physics. Another course with comparable rigor may substitute. One unit may be introductory physical science that is designed to prepare students for subsequent courses in physics and chemistry. Two units must be lab-based. (3) World history with a geography component, U.S. history, and one unit from the following: government, economics or geography. (4) One unit in either foreign language or world geography and one unit chosen from among foreign language, world geography, fourth-year math and fourth-year lab-based science.

Unconditional admission is granted to students who complete the 15.5-unit college-prep curriculum if they meet one of the following requirements:

- 3.2 GPA;
- ACT score of 16 and either a 2.5 GPA or class rank in top 50 percent;
- ACT score of 18 and 2.0 GPA; or
- NCAA Division I standards (for athletes).

**University placement requirements:** Any high school graduate who fails to meet standards for unconditional admission may be reviewed for enrollment in the summer or fall semester — regardless of his or her performance in high school. Institutional placement committees review high school performance, ACT scores and placement testing results (ACCUPLACER); they also consider nonacademic factors, including a student's special interests and skills. Students who lack sufficient English, reading or math skills may be admitted and required to enroll in a summer program, followed by the yearlong Academic Support Program. The yearlong program provides faculty instruction, computer-assisted learning opportunities, and peer tutoring and counseling.

**Community college admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or GEDs

**Community college placement requirements:** Students must present ACT scores or must take placement tests to assess English, math and reading skills. Additional testing may be required before students begin specific programs that lead to associate's degrees. Placement standards vary by institution. Students who do not meet institutionally established threshold scores on the tests must take remedial courses.

## Feedback Reports

Mississippi does not provide feedback reports from colleges to schools on student admission, placement and performance.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant program provides annual grants of up to $2,500 to state residents who enter college as full-time freshmen. These students must be National Merit/Achievement finalists or semifinalists or must have scores of at least 29 on the ACT (1280 composite on the SAT I) and high school GPAs of 3.5 or higher. The grants continue if students maintain 3.5 GPAs in college and remain in good standing.

The Mississippi Tuition Assistance Grant program provides grants of $500 per year for freshmen and sophomores and $1,000 per year for juniors and seniors. To be eligible, students must be Mississippi residents who are enrolled full time and have high school GPAs of at least 2.5 and ACT scores of at least 15 (or comparable SAT scores). To continue receiving the grant after the freshman year, students must maintain GPAs of 2.5.

Both scholarship programs limit the total financial-aid benefits a student may receive to the cost of attendance, as established by the institution.

# North Carolina

## High School Graduation Requirements[1]

| Units | CP[2] | CTP[2] | UNIV[2] | OCCUP[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[3] | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Science | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Social studies | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Foreign language | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Health/physical education | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Electives | 2 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| Career technical[4] | 4 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| **Total** | **20** | **20** | **20** | **22** |

**Notes:** (1) These requirements are effective for students entering ninth grade in 2000-2001 or later. (2) CP indicates Career Preparation; CTP indicates College Technical Preparation; UNIV indicates College/University Preparation; OCCUP indicates Occupational Preparation for students with disabilities who have individual programs of study. These students must complete 300 hours of school-based training and 360 hours of paid employment. Content requirements in English, math, science and social studies are modified to meet student needs. (3) CTP and UNIV math courses begin with Algebra I. CP includes Algebra I. The UNIV track will require one additional course beyond Algebra II beginning with students who enter ninth grade in 2002-2003. (4) Units may be earned in career tech, JROTC or art.

**High school graduation test:** Eighth-graders are required to pass the North Carolina Tests of Computer Skills, and ninth-graders must pass a competency test in reading and writing. Retests are provided. Beginning with the graduating class of 2005, students must pass the North Carolina High School Exit Exam. The test, which will be given to 11th-graders, evaluates students' competence in using data/numbers, in solving problems, and in communicating and processing information. North Carolina administers end-of-course exams in 10 subjects, incorporates the scores into course grades and reports the scores on student transcripts.

## Early Outreach Programs

North Carolina sponsors Pathways of North Carolina, a statewide effort to increase the college-going rate. A Web site and toll-free call center offer information and intervention to middle grades and high school students and to their parents/guardians.

The University of North Carolina System administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program, which targets 15 school districts with high poverty rates and low college-going rates. The program provides tutoring/mentoring, academic planning/preparation, financial-aid planning, college tours, professional development and resources for Spanish-speaking students.

The North Carolina Mathematics and Science Education Network Pre-College Program seeks to increase the number of high school graduates ready to pursue math, science and related majors in college. For sixth- through 12th graders, it offers academic enrichment during school, Saturday academies, summer programs, leadership training and career activities. It also offers seminars for parents to help them prepare their children for college. North Carolina also offers the Early Mathematics Placement Testing Program to all high schools in the state. It provides a "practice" test covering topics through Algebra II to assess student readiness for college-level math courses. It provides students who take the test with the results and advice about courses to take during the remaining years of high school.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students who are at least 16 years old are eligible to enroll in college while remaining in high school. They may enroll in any program of study or continuing education course if space is available. School officials must approve a student's dual enrollment and must certify that the student is progressing satisfactorily toward graduation. Community college courses are free to high school students, but they must pay tuition and fees at University of North Carolina institutions.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:**

| Units[1] | Current | 2004 | 2006 |
|---|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Science[3] | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Social studies[4] | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Foreign language[5] | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Electives | 3 | 3 | 3 |

**Notes:** (1) Institutions may set higher standards. (2) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry; Algebra I, Algebra II and one beyond Algebra II; or Integrated Math I, II and III. (3) Includes life or biological science and physical science. One unit must be lab-based. (4) U.S. history and one other course. (5) Two units in the same language.

**University placement requirements:** In the University of North Carolina System, institutions make decisions regarding placement in remedial courses. Universities sometimes have contracts with community colleges to provide remedial instruction.

**Community college admission requirements:** Community colleges have open-door admission policies for applicants who are high school graduates or who are at least 18 years old (or are emancipated minors).

**Community college placement requirements:** All community colleges require students to take placement tests in reading, writing and math using ASSET, COMPASS or ACCUPLACER. Some community colleges exempt students from testing if they meet institutionally established thresholds on the SAT I or ACT. Students who do not meet these thresholds may be asked to enroll in developmental coursework.

## Feedback Reports

The University of North Carolina System provides schools with three feedback reports: *Freshman Application Report, Freshman Performance Report,* and *Retention, Graduation and Persistence Report.* The reports provide individual schools with information on the numbers of high school graduates attending college, the proportions admitted, their scores on college admission tests, the numbers and percentages enrolled in college remedial courses, their performance in the freshman year, and persistence and graduation rates.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

North Carolina does not sponsor a statewide merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria. It does offer need-based funding.

# Oklahoma

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social studies[3] | 3 |
| Fine arts | 2 |
| Electives | 8 |
| **Total** | **23** |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I and two higher-level units. (2) Biology and two units in life, physical or earth science or technology. (3) U.S. history, Oklahoma history and U.S. government.

**High school graduation test:** To graduate, students must pass end-of-instruction tests in English II, U.S. history, biology I, Algebra I and the writing portion of English II. Students have one chance to retake the tests. Students' highest scores are reported on their transcripts for use by potential employers and colleges and universities.

## Early Outreach Programs

Oklahoma administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program includes an awareness initiative and a scholarship program that augments the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (see **state merit-based scholarship programs**) by defraying college expenses other than tuition.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and ACT Inc. sponsor the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) statewide. Participating school districts test eighth-graders using the EXPLORE test and 10th-graders using the PLAN test.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school juniors and seniors who meet college/university admission standards may earn college credit during high school. If they want to enroll in courses in English, history, math or science, they must have scores of at least 19 on the related ACT subject tests. Students also must have recommendations from their high school counselors, permission from parents/guardians, and confirmation from high school principals that they are on track to graduate on time.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** Students must have diplomas from accredited high schools or must have GEDs. They also must complete the 15-unit pre-college core:

| Units | |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 2 |
| Social studies[3] | 3 |
| Other | 3 |
| **Total** | **15** |

**Notes:** (1) Students may choose from Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, trigonometry, math analysis or calculus. (2) Students may choose from lab-based biology, chemistry, physics or a lab science certified by the school district. (3) U.S. history and two of the following: economics, geography, government or non-Western history.

Students who meet curricular requirements may follow one of three routes to admission:

- **ACT/SAT I** test scores of 24/1090 for the University of Oklahoma; 22/1020 for Oklahoma State; or 20/940 for regional universities;
- **high school GPA/class rank** of 3.0/top 30 percent for the University of Oklahoma; 3.0/top 33 percent for Oklahoma State; or 2.7/top 50 percent for regional universities; or
- **15-unit core GPA** of 3.0 for the University of Oklahoma (ACT score of 22 also required); 3.0 for Oklahoma State; or 2.7 for regional universities.

**University placement requirements:** If students have not completed pre-college curricular requirements (see **university admission requirements**), they must satisfy the deficiencies before they take college-level courses. They must have ACT scores of 19 in the subject subtests, must pass institutional assessments, or must take remedial courses in the subjects.

**Technical college admission requirements:** Students must have diplomas from accredited high schools or GEDs and must have taken the ACT.

**Technical college placement requirements:** If students have not completed pre-college curricular requirements (see **university admission requirements**), they must satisfy the deficiencies before they take college-level courses. They must have ACT scores of 19 in the subject subtests, must pass institutional assessments, or must take remedial courses in the subjects. Students pursuing associate of arts or associate of science degrees must meet all high school curricular requirements. Those pursuing applied degrees or certificate programs must meet only the curricular requirements that are prerequisites for those programs.

## Feedback Reports

Feedback reports in Oklahoma provide information about the numbers and percentages of high school graduates who apply to college, are accepted and enroll. The reports also include information on how many college-prep courses these graduates completed and on their GPAs and class ranks in high school. The reports include scores on college admission tests, the number and percentage of students taking remedial courses, freshman performance, and the number of college students who continue from one year to the next.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP) provides tuition at two- or four-year public institutions in Oklahoma. Eighth-, ninth- and 10th-graders whose family incomes do not exceed $50,000 may enroll in the program. Students must maintain 2.5 GPAs in a 17-unit high school curriculum. In addition to the pre-college core (see **university admission requirements**), they must take two years of foreign language or technology; one of the "other" courses must be fine arts or speech. Students must refrain from gangs, drugs and alcohol. Students must begin using the scholarships within three years of high school graduation. The scholarships expire five years after high school graduation, and thus students who delay using them may reduce the overall benefits. To keep the scholarships, students must maintain GPA standards set by the colleges. (See **early outreach programs** for linkage to GEAR UP program.)

# South Carolina

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | College-prep | Tech-prep |
|---|---|---|
| English/language arts | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics | 4 | 4 |
| Science | 3 | 3 |
| U.S. history/Constitution | 1 | 1 |
| Economics | .5 | .5 |
| U.S. government | .5 | .5 |
| Other social studies | 1 | 1 |
| Physical education/JROTC | 1 | 1 |
| Computer science | 1 | 1 |
| Foreign language | 1 | 0 |
| Career education | 0 | 1 |
| Electives | 7 | 7 |
| Total | 24 | 24 |

**High school graduation test:** Students must pass the High School Exit Examination, which first is administered in 10th grade. The exam includes subtests in reading, math and writing. Students have at least four opportunities to pass the test. In 2003, the Exit Examination will be replaced by the South Carolina Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests' end-of-course exams.

## Early Outreach Programs

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program works with the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, South Carolina Educational Television and the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce to provide focused interventions in academic and personal development as well as mentoring/tutoring for sixth- and seventh-graders. The goal is to prepare these students for college. GEAR UP and its partners have developed a comprehensive dissemination network to provide information to students and parents through Web sites and compact discs.

The Commission on Higher Education also administers the Higher Education Awareness Program (HEAP), which provides eighth-graders and their parents/guardians with information about college.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Institutions have different eligibility requirements for joint enrollment and early admission.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** College-preparatory course requirements are listed below. Each institution may make exceptions for students, including those who completed the tech-prep program, as long as they meet all other criteria for admission.

| Units | PCC |
|---|---|
| English[1] | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 |
| Social science[4] | 3 |
| Foreign language | 2 |
| Physical education/JROTC | 1 |
| Electives | 4 |
| **Total** | **20** |

**Notes:** (1) Includes American and English literature. (2) Includes Algebra I. Applied Math I and II may substitute for Algebra I for students who pass Algebra II. (3) Three lab-based courses from two different fields — selected from biology, chemistry or physics. Students may substitute higher-level courses for which introductory courses in these fields are prerequisites. (4) Includes U.S. history.

**University placement requirements:** Institutions set policies regarding student placement. Most institutions have arrangements with community colleges to provide remedial courses. Universities may require students to participate in supplemental programs as they take college-level courses.

**Technical college admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or the equivalent, or they must be at least 18 years old and perform satisfactorily on tests that demonstrate their ability to benefit from instruction.

**Technical college placement requirements:** Students must take placement tests — generally COMPASS or ASSET — in reading, English and math. If they do not meet institutionally determined thresholds, they must complete remedial coursework prior to enrolling in college-level courses.

## Feedback Reports

The South Carolina Department of Education compiles a report on the numbers and percentages of high school graduates who attend college. The report indicates the numbers of college courses that students passed or failed or for which they received no credit, as well as the passing rates in college courses by subject area. The report is based on transcripts that public colleges and universities provide to high schools concerning their graduates.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

To be eligible for the scholarships listed below, students must be South Carolina residents who are enrolled full time in a public or private college in the state. They must be pursuing degrees and must be free of felony or alcohol-/drug-related convictions. They also must not be in default on federal or state financial aid loans. Students may qualify for only one of these scholarships.

**Palmetto Fellows Scholarships** provide a maximum of $6,700 per year at public or private four-year institutions. Students must meet the following requirements: 1200 SAT I or 27 ACT; 3.5 GPA after 11th grade; and rank in the top 5 percent of the high school class after either 10th or 11th grade.

**LIFE Scholarships** provide an annual maximum of $4,700 plus $300 for a book allowance at four-year institutions. Students must meet two of the following requirements: 1100 SAT or 24 ACT; 3.0 GPA; or top 30 percent of graduating class.

**LIFE Scholarships** provide tuition plus book allowances of $300 at two-year or technical colleges for those with high school GPAs of 3.0.

**South Carolina HOPE Scholarships** provide a maximum of $2,500 plus book allowances of $150 for freshmen who had high school GPAs of 3.0 and attend public or private four-year institutions. These scholarships are not renewable.

# Tennessee

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units[1] | University-prep | Tech-prep |
|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 | 3 |
| Social studies[4] | 3 | 3 |
| Wellness | 1 | 1 |
| Foreign language | 2 | 0 |
| Fine arts | 1 | 0 |
| Technical area | 0 | 4 |
| Electives | 3 | 2 |
| **Total** | **20** | **20** |

**Notes:** (1) Students may graduate with honors if they earn GPAs of 3.0 in either curriculum and meet local school districts' requirements. (2) Includes Algebra I, Math for Technology II or Integrated Math I. (3) Includes biology. (4) Includes U.S. history, world history/geography, economics and government.

**High school graduation test:** Tennessee is replacing competency tests in math and language arts with end-of-course exams in algebra, biology and English II. Students who began ninth grade in 2001-2002 must meet the requirements of the new testing program. Tennessee administers several end-of-course exams, but students are required to pass only the three specified ones in order to graduate from high school. School systems must provide extra-help sessions — one of which must be during the school day — for students who do not pass the tests. Students may retake the tests during any regular testing administration.

## Early Outreach Programs

Tennessee is identifying career pathways and aligning the curriculum accordingly as part of the Education Edge (School-to-Career) program. Each career pathway will include work-based, academic and technical content that meets standards in the private sector. High school students will follow career pathways that connect secondary education, postsecondary education and the workplace. Students will receive comprehensive career guidance that begins when they are in kindergarten. In addition to career information, the program will provide job shadowing, mentorships, job training and internship opportunities for students while they are still in school.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school juniors and seniors may be admitted to colleges for concurrent enrollment and receive credit in both high school and college for college courses. They also may enroll as joint enrollment students and earn only college credit. Younger gifted students also may enroll in college courses. All such students remain enrolled in high school and are not considered degree-seeking students. Institutions set the standards for enrollment of high school students.

Institutions may admit applicants who have completed 11th grade and will not continue in high school. Such students must have high school GPAs of 3.2, ACT scores of 22 (some institutions have higher thresholds) and statements from their high school principals that the college courses will substitute for the remaining high school courses required for graduation. These students also must have endorsements from their counselors and parents/guardians.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**College and University admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or GEDs with scores that meet institutional requirements, and they must have taken the ACT or SAT. Except for students who graduated with honors or who have high ACT or SAT scores, students who apply to universities must pass the following courses in high school:

| Units | |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 2 |
| Social science[3] | 2 |
| Foreign language[4] | 2 |
| Arts | 1 |

**Notes:** (1) Algebra I, Algebra II, and geometry. (2) One unit must be lab-based. (3) Includes U.S. history. (4) Two units in the same language are required.

**College and university placement requirements:** At institutions governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents, students with scores below 19 on the ACT are required to take placement tests. The board sets the threshold scores for placement; students who do not meet these standards must take remedial courses. Institutions within the University of Tennessee System establish placement requirements and set thresholds for placement into remedial courses.

**Community college admission requirements:** Students must have high school diplomas or GEDs with scores that meet institutional requirements, and they must have taken the ACT or SAT.

**Community college placement requirements:** The Tennessee Board of Regents' policies require students with scores below 19 on the ACT to take placement tests. The board sets the threshold scores for placement; students who do not meet these standards must take remedial courses. Placement requirements apply only to students who are pursuing degrees, diplomas or certificates and to students who are taking courses that apply toward degree programs.

## Feedback Reports

The Tennessee Board of Regents provides high schools, upon request, with information about how their graduates perform in college. These reports indicate the numbers of graduates who applied, were accepted and enrolled in college. The reports also include students' scores on college admission and placement tests, the numbers of college-prep courses taken, students' GPAs in high school, freshman-year performance, and college graduation rates.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

Tennessee does not sponsor a statewide merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria. It does offer need-based funding.

# Texas

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units[1] | Minimum | Recommended | Distinguished[2] |
|---|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[3] | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Science[4] | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Social studies | 2.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Economics | .5 | .5 | .5 |
| Language (not English) | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| Health/physical education | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Speech | .5 | .5 | .5 |
| Tech applications | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Fine arts | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Academic elective | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Electives | 5.5 | 3.5 | 2.5 |
| Total | 22 | 24 | 24 |

**Notes:** (1) Beginning with the Class of 2005, all students must complete the recommended curriculum — except students with special permission, who must meet minimum standards. (2) The Distinguished Diploma also requires students to achieve high standards in four courses as evidenced by passing Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate end-of-course exams, earning B's in dual-enrollment college courses, or completing advanced research. (3) Algebra I for all diplomas. Algebra II and geometry are required for the Recommended and Distinguished diplomas. In spring 2005, geometry will be required for the Minimum diploma. (4) Includes one unit of biology and choices from among biology, chemistry and physics. Recommended and Distinguished diplomas also require a course in introduction to technology.

**High school graduation test:** In order to graduate, students are required to pass each section (reading, writing, math) of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) or the end-of-course exams in English II, Algebra I and either biology or U.S. history. The TAAS is given in 10th grade; students may retake any subtests that they fail any time the test is administered. In 2003-2004, 11th-graders will take end-of-course exams in English, Algebra I, geometry, social studies and science. They must pass each part, and they may retake parts. A new graduation test, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), is being developed.

## Early Outreach Programs

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program called TGAP (Texans Getting Academically Prepared). The effort is a partnership among the TEA, the Texas Business and Education Coalition, Project GRAD, Texas A&M Pre-College Outreach Centers and AMS Production Group. These partners work with six school districts and several state universities. TGAP's goals include building educators' and students' capacity to prepare for college; making students and their families more aware of college opportunities; and providing students with incentives to excel.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Texas allows concurrent enrollment (college credit only) and dual enrollment (credit in both high school and college) in college courses. To be eligible, high school students must take the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) test or an approved substitute, such as COMPASS or ACCUPLACER. If students have scored high enough on the SAT I, ACT or TAAS (see **university placement requirements**), they are not required to take TASP to qualify for concurrent or dual enrollment. Students who meet English, math or reading requirements may take college-level courses related to the parts of the test they have passed.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**University admission requirements:** The top 10 percent of Texas high school graduates automatically are eligible for admission to any public undergraduate institution. Institutions set the admission requirements, which usually include ACT or SAT I scores, for other applicants. Universities require students to have high school diplomas.

**University placement requirements:** Students are required to take the TASP test or an alternative test in reading, writing and math before they enroll in college-level classes. Students are exempt from testing if they achieve certain scores (listed below) on the ACT, SAT I or TAAS. Those who do not pass all sections of the TASP test must enroll in developmental courses in the subjects that they failed. Students may take the TASP test while they are in high school. Test scores are valid for five years.

- ACT — 23, with at least 19 each in English and math;
- SAT I — 1070, with at least 500 each in verbal and math;
- TAAS — 1770 in writing, 86 in math and 89 in reading.

**Community college admission requirements:** Community colleges require high school diplomas or GEDs. Those without diplomas or GEDs must pass institutionally determined tests to demonstrate that they can benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** Community colleges have the same placement requirements that universities have for college courses that are applicable to degree programs and transferable among colleges. Vocational programs require tests in reading, math and English. Institutions set requirements for remediation.

## Feedback Reports

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's *Annual Application Report on Student Performance* provides high schools with information about the numbers and percentages of their graduates who applied, were accepted and enrolled in college. *The Annual Summary of TASP Alternative Test Results* provides information about student test scores and exemptions as well as how many students are considered ready for college.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The Texas Grant Program is available to state residents who graduated from public or accredited private high schools in Texas. Applicants must complete the recommended high school curriculum or its equivalent; demonstrate financial need; take at least 75 percent of a full-time schedule in undergraduate degree programs or certificate programs within 16 months of high school graduation; and have no convictions for felonies or drug-related crimes. The award depends on the number of credit-hours taken and the type of institution. The amount generally equals tuition and required fees.

# Virginia

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units[1] | Standard | Advanced Studies |
|---|---|---|
| English | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 | 4 |
| Science[3] | 3 | 4 |
| History/social science[4] | 3 | 4 |
| Foreign language | 0 | 3 |
| Health and physical education | 2 | 2 |
| Art | 1 | 1 |
| Electives | 6 | 2 |
| Total | 22 | 24 |

**Notes:** (1) Students with disabilities may receive modified standard diplomas or special diplomas. (2) Algebra I or above; additional courses must be geometry, Algebra II or higher-level courses. (3) All must be lab-based and chosen from among biology, chemistry, physics and earth science. Credits must be in at least two disciplines for the standard diploma and at least three disciplines for the advanced diploma. International Baccalaureate diploma requirements in science may substitute. (4) U.S. and Virginia history, U.S. and Virginia government, and a world history/geography course. The advanced diploma requires an additional course in world history and geography.

**High school graduation test:** Virginia distinguishes between standard credits and verified credits; end-of-course exams are used to verify credits. For the standard diploma, students must verify six credits by passing two end-of-course tests in English and four in subjects of their choosing. Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2003-2004, a student earning the standard diploma will have to verify credit by passing two end-of-course tests in English, one each in math, history and science; and one in a subject of his or her choosing. These more specific test requirements already have been implemented for the advanced diploma. Students may retake the tests whenever they are administered; provisions are made for some students to retest sooner. Students who receive modified standard diplomas or special diplomas are not required to verify credit, but they must attempt any end-of-course tests in classes they take. To earn the modified standard diploma, a student must pass eighth-grade English and math tests.

## Early Outreach Programs

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) administers the statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program to help low-income students in 22 middle schools prepare for college. It provides early intervention through summer activities on college campuses, neighborhood academies, and parental-involvement initiatives; professional development for teachers and counselors; and scholarships for eligible participants. The scholarship awards are made through the Virginia Education Savings Trust, a federal 529 College Savings Plan.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Virginia provides high school students with joint enrollment opportunities. These college-credit courses generally are offered by community colleges and taught on high school campuses, but some four-year institutions allow high school students to enroll in classes. Students must obtain approval from high school principals and must be accepted by the colleges for admission to the courses.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**College and university admission requirements:** Admission requirements vary by institution. Colleges and universities consider the high school curricula that students took, high school GPAs, SAT scores and class ranks. Students must take the SAT, and institutions set the threshold scores for admission. Institutions require students to have taken four English courses, but their requirements in other subjects vary. Institutions require two to four courses in mathematics, science and social studies; the foreign language courses required range from zero to three.

**College and university placement requirements:** Institutions make decisions about placement testing and set score thresholds.

**Community college admission requirements:** Students may enroll at community colleges if they have high school diplomas or GEDs or if they pass institutionally determined tests to demonstrate their ability to benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** Community colleges require students to take placement tests before enrolling in courses that lead to college credit. These tests also are used to determine students' placement in math and English classes. The tests used and the score requirements vary by institution.

## Feedback Reports

Virginia discontinued feedback reports in 1999 because of the variation in institutions' standards for admission and placement.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP) provides assistance to students who have financial need, graduate from high school with GPAs of 2.5 and maintain GPAs of 2.0 in college. The program's purpose is to encourage students in the middle grades and high school to prepare for college. The award amounts vary based on need but generally cover tuition for the neediest students. To be eligible, students must be state residents who graduated from Virginia high schools and are enrolled in public two- or four-year institutions in Virginia. Recipients must be full-time students pursuing degrees, certificates or diplomas. They must demonstrate financial need (as determined by the institutions) and must be considered dependent students according to federal financial aid guidelines.

# West Virginia

## High School Graduation Requirements

| Units | Diploma[1] |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[2] | 3 |
| Science[3] | 3 |
| Social studies[4] | 3 |
| Physical education/health | 2 |
| Arts | 1 |
| Electives | 4 |
| Total[5] | 20 |

**Notes:** (1) Ninth-graders in 2005 must complete a 20-unit core curriculum comprising the courses listed above except that four social studies courses and three electives will be required. (2) Includes Algebra I and one beyond. (3) Includes two units from Coordinated and Thematic Science 9 and 10 and one beyond. (4) Includes U.S. history and world studies. (5) In choosing courses to meet the distribution of credits required for the diploma, a student must select four credits from three pathways—professional, skilled and entry—that also constitute a career major.

**High school graduation test:** Based on 11th-grade assessments, West Virginia issues a certificate of basic skills proficiency and a county warranty to students who reach the 50th percentile in reading, math and language. Students who reach the 70th percentile receive advanced competency certificates and warranties.

## Early Outreach Programs

The West Virginia Department of Education administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program that focuses on middle grade students in eight counties. Its purposes are to get these students prepared for postsecondary education; to develop alliances among schools, colleges, students, parents/guardians, government and community groups; to provide students and their parents/guardians with information about college opportunities; and to strengthen academic programs. Scholarships (up to $500 per year of program participation) are awarded to students based on parental participation, discipline and academic performance. The money awarded each year is held is escrow for tuition until the student begins college.

West Virginia also has adopted ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) for eighth-graders.

## Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

West Virginia colleges offer opportunities for high school students to take college courses, and they govern the eligibility policies. Students generally are required to have B averages and permission from their high schools and parents/guardians. Local boards of education govern policies on joint enrollment that allow students to earn credit in high school as well as in college for college-level courses.

## Postsecondary Admission/Placement

**College/university admission requirements:** Admission to institutions that offer programs leading to bachelor's degrees requires: (1) a GED or high school diploma; (2) GPA of at least 2.0, ACT score of at least 17 or similar score on SAT; and (3) completion of specific high school courses (see chart below). Institutions may exempt 5 percent of their freshmen from the curricular requirements and grant them conditional admission.

| Units | |
|---|---|
| English | 4 |
| Mathematics[1] | 3 |
| Science[2] | 3 |
| Social studies | 3 |

**Notes:** (1) Includes Algebra I. (2) Two must be lab-based.

**University placement requirements:** Students must meet thresholds on math and English assessments (see the chart below); those who do not meet these levels are placed in remedial courses. Institutions are encouraged to assist students who do not meet the reading standards.

| | Math[1] | English[2] | Reading |
|---|---|---|---|
| ACT | 19 | 17 | 17 |
| SAT I | 430 | 410[3] | 420[3] |
| ASSET | 39/32 | 37 | 30 |
| COMPASS | 59 | 70 | 75 |
| ACCUPLACER | 86/84 | 87 | 79 |
| Nelson-Denney[4] | | | 30th percentile |

**Notes:** (1) ASSET subscores are for the numerical and the elementary algebra subtests; COMPASS subscore is for the pre-algebra subtest; ACCUPLACER subscores are for the arithmetic and elementary algebra subtests. (2) Placement also depends on performance on an institutionally developed writing test. (3) The verbal score of the SAT I is used for both English and reading placement. (5) Nelson-Denney Reading Inventory.

**Community college admission requirements:** To enroll in community colleges and in four-year institutions' community-college divisions, students must have earned high school diplomas or GEDs or must pass a test designed to determine whether they are able to benefit from instruction.

**Community college placement requirements:** The ACT, SAT and ASSET tests are used for placement. Institutions set the threshold scores. Students whose reading, writing or math scores are not satisfactory must complete remedial courses before they take college-level courses.

## Feedback Reports

*The College Freshman Success Reports* by ACT Inc. provide the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and West Virginia schools with information about students who took the ACT and enrolled in public or private institutions in the state. These data include the hours attempted and earned, GPAs, numbers who took remedial courses, and the number who completed the freshman year. The reports also compare the performance of students who did and did not complete a college-prep curriculum.

## State Merit-Based Scholarship Programs

The PROMISE (Providing Real Opportunities for Maximizing In-state Student Excellence) Scholarship is based entirely on merit. It offers full tuition to a state college or university or an equivalent award toward tuition at an in-state private college. To be eligible, a West Virginia high school graduate must meet the following requirements:

- 3.0 GPA in core and overall coursework. The PROMISE core is aligned with university admission requirements.
- ACT composite score of at least 21 or a combined SAT I score of 1000.

# Reference: Relevant Web Sites

Alabama

G: www.alsde.edu/allreportcards/quick_facts.pdf

T: www.alsde.edu/general/great_expectations.pdf

J: www.acs.cc.al.us/acs/pol/pol80103.htm

A: www.acs.cc.al.us/acs/pol/pol80101.htm

P: www.acs.cc.al.us/acs/pol/pol90201.htm

**Arkansas**

G: http://arkedu.state.ar.us/pdf/standards_2000.pdf

T: http://arkedu.state.ar.us/actaap/index.htm

J/A: www.arkansashighered.com

A/P: www.work-ed.state.ar.us/postsecond.html

M: www.arkansashighered.com/challenge.html

**Delaware**

G: www.doe.state.de.us/gradregs/DOEGrad Regs.htm

T: www.doe.state.de.us/policy/regs%5Fmanual/100file.htm

J: www.dtcc.edu/catalog/student.htm

A/P: www.udel.edu/admissions/viewbook/apply/

A/P: www.dsc.edu/admissions/admissions.html

A/P: www.dtcc.edu/handbook/getting_started.htm #admissions

M: www.doe.state.de.us/aab/student%20 accountability %20sb%20260.pdf

Florida

G: www.firn.edu/doe/curriculum/intro.pdf

T: www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcat/pdf/fcatfaq1.pdf

J: www.oppaga.state.fl.us/profiles/2028

A: www.fldcu.org/chn/rules/6C-6.pdf

P: www.firn.edu/doe/sas/fcephome.htm

A/P: www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm (Follow links: Title XVI—education; chapters 229.57 and 240.321)

M: www.firn.edu/doc/brfutures

**Georgia**

G: www.doe.k12.ga.us/legalservices/160-4-2-.46.pdf

T: www.doe.k12.ga.us/sla/ret/ghsgtabout.html

J/A/P: www.usg.edu/admin/policy/400.phtml

A/P: www.dtae.tec.ga.us/teched/CTS/enrollment.html

M: www.gsfc.org/hope

**Kentucky**

G: www.lrc.state.ky.us/KAR/704/003/305.htm

O: www.mathclass.org/welcome-kemtp.htm

A: www.cpe.state.ky.us/keyind/www/going2/pccchrt.pdf

A/P: www.cpe.state.ky.us/policies/policies_college_admissions.asp

A/P: www.kctcs.net/student/catalog/admissions.pdf

M: www.kheaa.com/keesfaqs.html

**Louisiana**

G: www.doe.state.la.us/DOE/OSSP/grad Requirements.asp

T: www.doe.state.la.us/DOE/asps/home.asp?I=TESTS

A: www.regents.state.la.us/PubRel/topscore.htm

M: www.osfa.state.la.us (Follow link: scholarships and grants)

**Maryland**

G: www.msde.state.md.us/hsimprovement/creditrequirements.html

T: www.msde.state.md.us/Fact%20Sheets/Fact1HSA.pdf

A: www.mhec.state.md.us/StuGuide/guide02.pdf

P: www.mhec.state.md.us (Follow links to higher education in Maryland; colleges and universities in Maryland)

M: http://polar.mhec.state.md.us/SSA/progdesc.htm

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Key: Letters from websites refer to sections of state policy analysis, G = HS Graduation Requirements; T = HS Graduation Test; O = Early Outreach; J = Joint Enrollment/Early Admission; A = University/College Admission; P = University/College Placement; M = State Merit Scholarship Program.

# Relevant Web Sites (continued)

**Mississippi**

G: www.mde.k12.ms.us/acad/osa/newgrad.html

T: www.mde.k12.ms.us/public/IHF-1.htm

A: http://192.103.84.28/academicaffairs/admission.htm

P: www.ihl.state.ms.us/admin/downloads/policiesandbylaws.pdf

M: www.ihl.state.ms.us/financialaid/complete.html

**North Carolina**

G/T: www.ncpublicschools.org/students/graduation.html

O: www.CFNC.org

A: www.northcarolina.edu/student_info/mcr.cfm

A/P: www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/Stu_Dev_Services/AAAManualFeb2002_.PDF

**Oklahoma**

G/T: www.sde.state.ok.us
(Follow links to site index and graduation requirements)

O: www.okhighered.org/gearup

J: www.okhighered.org/student-center/mainsite/jrhigh-highscl/ecollege-credit.shtml

A/P: www.okhighered.org/student-center/mainsite/jrhigh-highscl/index.html

M: www.okhighered.org/ohlap/

**South Carolina**

G: www.sde.state.sc.us/tracks/educators/diplomas/gradreq.htm

T: www.sde.state.sc.us/archive/test123/about.htm

A: www.che400.state.sc.us/web/Academic/College%20Prerequisites%20.html

A/P: www.che400.state.sc.us/web/Adm/a7.htm

M: www.che400.state.sc.us

**Tennessee**

G: www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/0520/0520-01/0520-01-03.pdf

T: www.state.tn.us/sbe/highschooltests.html

O: www.state.tn.us/education/eefacts.htm

P: www.tbr.state.tn.us/policies_guidelines/academic_guidelines/A-100.htm

A: www.tbr.state.tn.us/policies_guidelines/academic_policies/2_03-00_00.htm

**Texas**

G: www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/handbook

T: www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/

J: www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/HTML/0211/policies_old.htm

A: www.thecb.state.tx.us/CBRules/readtac$extc0e4.html

P: www.thecb.state.tx.us/CBRules/readtac$exte9ec.html

M: www.texasscholars.org/texasgrant.shtml

**Virginia**

G: www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/webcrses.html

T: www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Parents/soastude.html

J: www.schev.edu/students/hsclassroomprep4.asp?from=policymakers

A: www.schev.edu/Students/publicCollegeAdmissioinReq.asp?from=parents

M: www.schev.edu/
(Follow links for financial aid for college)

**West Virginia**

G/T: http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p2444.01.html

A: www.scs.wvnet.edu/scsrules/t131s44.htm

P: www.hepc.wvnet.edu/scs/p06scs.htm

M: www.promiseschoolarships.org

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Key: Letters from websites refer to sections of state policy analysis, G = HS Graduation Requirements; T = HS Graduation Test; O = Early Outreach; J = Joint Enrollment/Early Admission; A = University/College Admission; P = University/College Placement; M = State Merit Scholarship Program.

## Other publications in this series

*Student Readiness for College: Connecting State Policies* (2002)

*Reporting on College Readiness: Information that connects colleges and schools* (2001)

## Other relevant SREB publications

*Goals for Education: Challenge to Lead* (2002)

*Senior Project Guide* (2002) — a publication *of High Schools That Work*

*Spotlight on Algebra* (2001)

*Helping Families to Help Students: Kentucky's Family Resource and Youth Services Centers* (2001)

*Educational Benchmarks 2000*

*Reducing Remedial Education: What Progress Are States Making?* (2000)

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